

Appl. No. 10/711,141
Amdt. dated February 27, 2006
Reply to Office action of November 02, 2005

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

1. Rejection of claims 1-20 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a):

Claims 1-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over the applicant's prior art in view of Ker et al. (US 2002/0181177).

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Response:

The applicant would like to point out the patentable differences between claims 1 and 11 of the instant application and the cited prior art.

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Claim 1 contains the limitation of "a first n^+ diffusion region in the N-well connected to the first power terminal". As illustrated in Fig.5 of the instant application, the first n^+ diffusion region (114) is formed in the N-well (104) and is connected to the first power terminal (V_{DD}). The examiner has stated that the applicant's prior art teaches "a first n^+ diffusion region 16 in the N-well connected to the first power terminal V_{DD} ". However, from looking at Fig.1 of the applicant's prior art, the n^+ diffusion region 16 is formed in the p-type substrate, and is not formed in an N-well.

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In addition, the other n^+ diffusion region 18 of Fig.1 also cannot be used to teach this limitation since it is not in the N-well 20 and it is not connected to the first power terminal V_{DD} , but is instead connected to the second power terminal V_{SS} . Therefore, the applicant's prior art fails to teach the limitation of "a first n^+ diffusion region in the N-well connected to the first power terminal", as is recited in claim 1. Ker also fails to teach this limitation since Ker does not teach that an N-well is formed in a P-type substrate, and that a first n^+ diffusion region is formed in the N-well and is connected to the first power terminal. Since neither of the cited prior art references teaches this limitation, claim 1 is patentably distinguished from the

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prior art, and should be allowed.

Claim 11 contains the limitation of "a first n^+ diffusion region in the N-well".
As explained above, neither the applicant's prior art nor Ker teach this limitation,
5 and claim 11 is also patentably distinguished from the cited prior art.

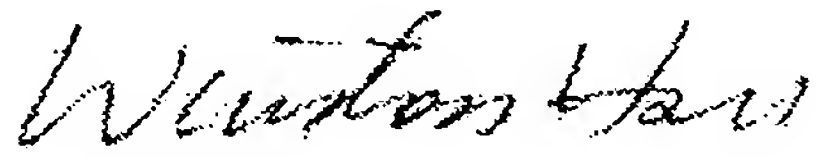
As to the examiner's contention that it is obvious to combine the teachings of
Ker with the teachings of the applicant's prior art, the applicant would like to make a
further comment on this combination. The applicant's prior art fails to teach the
10 limitation of an "output terminal connected to the second p^+ diffusion region" for the
ESD detecting circuit. Ker's Fig. 10, on the other hand, teaches that the p^+ diffusion
region in the P-well 84 is connected to a voltage source VSS, and is not connected to
the output of the ESD detecting circuit. Therefore, the applicant's prior art and the
Ker reference cannot be combined to form the claimed invention. For these reasons
15 claims 1 and 12 are patentably distinguished from the prior art. Furthermore, claims
2-10 and 12-20 are dependent on claims 1 and 11, and should be allowed if claims 1
and 11 are allowed. Reconsideration of claims 1-20 is respectfully requested.

In view of the above arguments in favor of patentability, the applicant respectfully
20 requests that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case.

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Sincerely yours,



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- 10 Note: Please leave a message in my voice mail if you need to talk to me. (The time in D.C. is 13 hours behind the Taiwan time, i.e. 9 AM in D.C. = 10 PM in Taiwan.)